



**Indian Health Service
National Director's Awards Ceremony**
December 6, 2001

Welcoming Remarks
by
Michael H. Trujillo, M.D., M.P.H., M.S.
Assistant Surgeon General
Director, Indian Health Service

We have accomplished much together over the past year. And we have accomplished a great deal over the past eight years. I remain impressed with the dedication of our employees in taking care of the day-to-day work at hand. And I am very proud of our employees who overcome the daily work demands without losing sight of the future IHS, so that we can continue to strive to provide the best health care services to American Indians and Alaska Natives nationwide.

This agency has established a forward momentum that we must maintain if we are to continue to meet the health needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives. Our achievements are a result of our collaborations, not the result of just one individual.

Those of you being honored here today represent the "tip of the iceberg" when we speak of dedicated and innovative IHS employees. You were nominated by your Areas and programs. Your achievements are certainly worthy of recognition. By honoring you, we are honoring all the thousands of IHS, tribal, and urban Indian health program employees who serve American Indian and Alaska Native people.

As a great lady, a friend and close associate, said, "my thanks to my staff, for it is their efforts that make the program successful." That lady was Luana Reyes. Her passing reminds us all that we are not here alone and that we do not accomplish things alone. There are many former employees, retirees, and those who have passed to another life who have brought the agency to where we are today. It is up to us to take the agency even farther. And together we can do that if we have new concepts, involve everyone, train and coach others, learn and apply what we know, be proactive, be the best we can for those we serve, do things right and for the right reasons. And certainly remain persistent, have courage, and be creative, be caring, have empathy and always, always listen.

Our children and their children will have a brighter future because you are there every day. Our families benefit.

Thank you for all that you have done. Thank you for all that you will continue to do.
Welcome to this awards ceremony.